

3. 2290 (Humphrey Bill)

Senate Armed Services Committee

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Provisions

Establishes Joint Committee on National security of 25 Members  
to study:

(a) whether foreign, domestic, and military policies are being appropriately integrated;

(b) recommendations and activities of NSC, emphasizing foreign policy, goals, strategies and alternatives;

(c) classification and declassification practices and to recommend procedures to be implemented.

Requires yearly reports to Congress.

Issues

Separation of powers and prerogatives of the President.

Comments

The bill would make Congress privy to the most sensitive activities of the National Security Council and the President's chief policy advisers in direct conflict with the prerogatives of the President.

The President might circumvent the bill by avoiding use of the NSC mechanism where sensitive issues are concerned, thus defeating the original purpose for which Congress established the NSC - to assure the thorough integration of policies relating to the national security.

Although the Joint Committee would have no legislative jurisdiction, its sweeping investigative activities would conflict with the jurisdictional responsibilities of existing standing committees of the Congress.

The bill is directed solely at the National Security Council and CIA is not mentioned. Therefore, it is questionable whether it would be proper for the Agency, as a subordinate of the NSC, to offer substantive comment.

Status

Armed Services Committee asked for our comments 20 July.

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